

Mayor Tim Kelly's Remarks in Response to the Violence that Occurred in the Early Morning of June 5, 2022, in Chattanooga, Tenn.

As prepared for a press conference held at 1 p.m. ET on June 5, 2022

Good afternoon.

There's a lot we don't know about what happened this morning, but what we do know is that there are families whose lives have been shattered because once again, we had people deciding to resolve their issues with firearms.

Ginny and I are grieving and praying for the families of those who lost their lives and for those who were injured as a result of this act of violence.

And while we are still gathering the facts in this case, we know that many of the recent acts of violence in our community have revolved around a very small group of people - often the same people, over and over again.

Here is my message to those individuals: We will relentlessly pursue you with all of the resources we have at our disposal. From forensics to federal support, we won't stop until you're in police custody. To anyone thinking about turning to violence, don't—there will be tremendous consequences for you. I should also note that my administration is fully committed to getting the Chattanooga Police Department all the resources they need to stop this cycle of violence.

Our city will not tolerate people who feel they are beyond the law. And while my administration is working hard to address the economic and social factors that often drive people to turn to violence in the first place, we are also committed to ensuring that those who commit acts of violence **will be held accountable**.

I'm grateful for the Chattanooga Police Department and for all of the first responders across multiple agencies who acted quickly and courageously to contain the situation.

I am also grateful to members of our City Council for being here today. We are all aligned, and we WILL act, together. Our city will treat this like the crisis it is. Over the next few weeks, my administration will be releasing even more ways our community will address gun violence.

And finally, I am a gun owner. I've been an avid hunter and marksman all my life—and so I want to say this clearly, I fully support responsible gun ownership, but Congress needs to do their jobs and pass common sense regulations that will help stop this nonsense. That doesn't mean taking guns away from responsible gun owners, but it does mean mandatory background checks and prohibiting high-capacity magazines that allow shooters to hurt dozens of people without having to so much as reload. In mass shootings between 2009 and 2020, high-capacity magazines led to 5x as many people shot per mass shooting. This stuff is just common sense. And it's a simple way we can keep people safe.

I'm tired of standing in front of you talking about guns and bodies. Chattanooga will not tolerate this in our community. Our city can put a stop to it, but each of us has to make the choice to do something. If you know **anything**, no matter how small or insignificant it might seem, call 423-643-5100—you can remain anonymous, we just want the information.

Stop the shooting, stop the violence. This city and our communities are better than this, and we demand it.

Thank you.